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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 6496  
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RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 7013  
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SIPDIS

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PM;  
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;  
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;  
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT IN  
JAPAN

11. LEAD STORIES: All Thursday morning papers gave top play to the  
launch on Wednesday of a DPJ-led government in coalition with the  
Social Democratic Party and People's New Party following the  
election of DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama as prime minister.

12. "Foundation of U.S.-Japan Relations Should Be Maintained" The  
moderate Yomiuri stated in an editorial (9/17): "Concerning the  
MSDF's refueling operation in the Indian Ocean, Prime Minister  
Hatoyama has said that he will not simply extend it after it expires  
next January. He should seek ways to continue the operation by  
considering measures other than 'simply' extending it. Regarding  
U.S. force realignment, including Futenma relocation, the steady  
implementation of the U.S.-Japan agreement is the fastest way to  
reduce the burden on local municipalities, including Okinawa."

13. "New Administration Should Eliminate Concerns about Its Policy  
toward U.S." The business-oriented Nikkei editorialized (9/17):  
"With the Hatoyama administration, there is concern about relations  
with the U.S. Prime Minister Hatoyama plans to hold his first  
meeting with President Obama during his upcoming visit to the U.S.  
The DPJ does not plan to extend Japan's refueling operation in the  
Indian Ocean, which is set to expire next January, but the USG is  
asking Japan to reconsider. Concerning U.S. force realignment,  
including Futenma relocation, there are also differences of opinion  
between the U.S., which calls for the implementation of the  
agreement made between the two governments, and the new  
administration. The prime minister said in his inaugural speech that  
building a relationship of trust with the President is the first  
step. Actions to maintain the robust U.S.-Japan alliance are  
indispensable in order to achieve that goal."

14. "Priority Should Be Placed on National Interests" The  
conservative Sankei argued in an editorial (9/17): "We cannot help  
feeling concerned about the Hatoyama administration's diplomatic and

security policy. Will the new administration be able to respond realistically and flexibly while maintaining an alliance with the Social Democratic Party, which considers the SDF to be unconstitutional?... Concern also remains about Foreign Minister Okada. While stating that the U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone [of Japan's diplomacy], he stresses an 'equal partnership' with the U.S. His statement contains no specific vision that explains exactly what his idea means. The foreign minister has expressed his intention to call on the U.S. to adopt a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. We should not forget that Japan's peace and security are being protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Diplomacy that just plays around with words could undermine the U.S.-Japan alliance. Prime Minister Hatoyama should take a pragmatic approach and exercise his leadership in order to dispel such concerns.... We urge him to reconsider whether it is appropriate to halt the refueling operation in the Indian Ocean even though the U.S. has expressed hope for its continuation."

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